

## IN SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,

DECEMBER 28, 1820.

MR. PLEASANTS, from the Committee on Naval Affairs, to whom was referred the memorial of Thomas Shields, submitted the following:

## REPORT:

The memorialist states, that Commodore Shaw, whilst he commanded the naval forces of the United States on the New Orleans station, caused to be built a public store-house for the use of the United States; that this store-house was built at the bay of St. Louis on a lot belonging to the memorialist, and by him voluntarily tendered for that purpose; that the said house, at the time of the attack of the enemy at that point on the 13th of December, 1814, contained stores, (for the supply of the crews of the vessels attached to the station,) belonging to the memorialist, of the value of \$4,887 96; that, previous to the attack of the enemy, the memorialist had erected, principally at his own expense, a small two gun battery, for the protection of the said store, and the property contained in it; from which a fire so steady and well directed was kept up, that the enemy was baffled in his several attempts to effect a landing, till the night of the 13th December, 1814, when a positive order was received, by the person having charge of the said store, from Lieut. Jones, commanding the detachment of naval force on the station, directing the said store to be blown up and destroyed, to prevent the enemy from getting possession of the supplies contained therein, of which it was understood he was much in need; the said store was, in pursuance of said order, accordingly blown up and destroyed with its contents; that, adjacent to the public store was a building belonging to the memorialist, and materials for other buildings, of the value of \$1,693 10, to which the fire, occasioned by the burning of the public store, extended, whereby the said building and materials were totally destroyed. The memorialist states his whole loss, occasioned by the burning of the public store aforesaid, to amount to the sum of \$6,581 6, for which he prays remuneration from Congress, if they shall think his claim just.

The committee, having duly considered the case of the memorialist, are of opinion that it is supported by the testimony exhibited. The store which were thus destroyed by burning the public store-house

to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy, were lodged at that place by the memorialist for the use of the naval force in the neighborhood; they were of the kind and quality usually furnished for such use by pursers in the navy, which was the office held by the memorialist, and the public store, from which they could be quickly and easily put on board the vessels requiring them, appears to have been the most natural place for their deposit; that, independent of the merits of the memorialist, in voluntarily tendering a situation for the erection and use of this building for public purposes, and erecting a battery for its protection, principally at his own expense; the committee think, under all the circumstances of the case, compensation ought to be made to him for the loss of the stores aforesaid, and his house and building materials adjacent to the said store-house, and consumed by the fire which caught from the burning of the same; and, for this purpose, they herewith report a bill.